

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in the application. A first Office Action was mailed on May 20, 2004. In the present Response, Applicants amend claims 1 and 4. No new matter is added.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 – 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese patent publication JP 11-234770 to Dochi et al. Applicant amends claims 1 and 4 to further clarify the nature of his invention, and respectfully traverses this rejection.

In amended independent claims 1 and 4, Applicant discloses an apparatus for transmission between subscriber terminals and digital switches that employ a 4:1 TDM multiplexing scheme, including a main path for carrying signals between the terminals and the switches, and a control path separate from the main path for carrying control information for maintenance purposes.

Claim 1 additionally includes an interface and control unit which is provided on said control path, and which converts the control information on said control path so as to make the control information conform to specifications of the said digital switches wherein the conversion of the control information is based on switch settings made to said interface-&-control unit.

Dochi discloses an ISDN subscriber system transmitter including a multiplexer/demultiplexer interface 1a connected to a termination interface 1g via a 2B+D processing section, and an M-channel processing section 1d or an EOC processing section 1e that is selected according to whether a transmission line of an exchange employs a 3-DSO or a 4:1TDM protocol (see, e.g., abstract of Dochi). As illustrated by FIG. 2 of Dochi, switch setting

receiver 22 transmits a signal to request switching. This signal controls a switch unit 13 to switch connections between the combination of MUX/DMUXs INF1 and MUX/DMUXs INF2 and the combination of 2B+D processing unit 14, M-channel processing unit 15, and EOC processing unit 16. The signal also controls switch unit 17 to switch connections between the combination of 2B+D processing unit 14, M-channel processing unit 15, and EOC processing unit 16 and the combination of MUX/DMUX units 18 and 19. In this manner, it is possible to set a channel to conform to a desired protocol such as 3-DSO, 4:1 TDM or the like. Applicant respectfully submits, however, unlike Applicants interface-&-control unit of claim 1, Dochi's switch setting receiver 22 fails to convert control information on a control path so that the control information conforms to specifications of the digital switches, based on switch settings made to the interface-&-control unit.

Claim 4 additionally includes a subscriber side interface unit which transmits an alarm notification to the digital switches via said control path wherein the alarm notification is configured in response to switch settings made to said subscriber-side interface unit so as to conform to specifications of said digital switches. Applicant respectfully submits that, although Dochi teaches switching signal connections in response to specified settings, Dochi fails to teach Applicant's claimed alarm notification configured in response to switch settings made to the subscriber-side interface unit so as to conform to specifications of said digital switches

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Dochi fails to teach Applicant's inventions as claimed in amended independent claims 1 and 4, and that amended independent claims 1 and 4 therefore stand in condition for allowance. As claims 2, 3 and 6 – 10 each respectively depend from one of allowable claims 1 and 4, Applicants further submit that claims 2, 3 and 6 – 10 are allowable for at least this reason.

CONCLUSION

An earnest effort has been made to be fully responsive to the Examiner's objections. In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that claims 1 – 10, consisting of independent claims 1 and 4, and the claims dependent therefrom, are in condition for allowance. Passage of this case to allowance is earnestly solicited. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged on Deposit Account 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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